

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Hoover J. Louie Interview Number: 14
 Chinese Name: _____ Number of Tapes: 1
 Date of Interview: 5/1/83 Length: 33 Minutes
 Interviewer: Ruby Lin Louie
 Others Present: None
 Language: English
 Summarizer: Suellen Cheng

Contents

Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary	Tape: <u>1</u> Side <u>A</u>
1	001-009 010-017 018-022 023-026 027-033	Introduction. Hoover J. Louie's (HJL) parents came from Toishan, China. Both grandfather and father were importers in Stockton, California. HJL was born in Stockton. HJL's family moved to Los Angeles during the Depression in 1931 or 1932 and stayed ever since. Family first lived at Second Street between San Gabriel and Griffith areas. It was a mixed neighborhood.	
2	034-039 040-042 043-050 051-059 060-075	Father had a gift shop in downtown Los Angeles first, then moved to New Chinatown when it was opened in 1938. HJL went to Grammar school in Chinatown. The first school HJL went to was on 22nd Street. Then HJL went to Castelar School. Ninety percent of the students were Chinese. Basically, the Chinese students were American citizens. HJL started going to the Chinese Catholic Center when he was in 5th or 6th grade. Dr. Stanley Chan and Mrs. Lily L. Chan, and Mr. and Mrs. George Chin were the founders. It was a Chinese language school. There were about 20 in one class.	
3	076-091 092-109	It was difficult to learn the Chinese that was taught in Chinese school, because it was different from HJL's family dialect. Both boys and girls of the Louie family went to Chinese school. In 1945 HJL's father died. HJL and family members all had to work including HJL's mother. Prior to that mother was a housewife and didn't know English.	
4	110-116	Mother was the eldest and had two sisters and one brother and was the only one to come to the U.S. Father's three brothers all came to the U.S.	

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Time Segment	Counter Number	Summary
4	117-125	During World War II, HJL sold souvenirs and flowers. He was also working as an extra.
	126-137	They saved the money they earned. HJL used to go to the penny movie house on Second Street.
	138-147	HJL spent about 2½ years at Belmont. HJL dropped out from Chinese school in the 11th grade.
5	148-186	HJL and his brother went to China with his mother in 1947. He was very enthusiastic about going back to China. They took the President Wilson Steamship. He went to an overseas Chinese school in China for almost a year. It was like a vacation because he didn't have to work. It was a boarding school.
6	187-195	AFTER 9 months, HJL and his family had to leave China because the Communist took over of China at the time.
	196-214	HJL visited his grandmother in the village during the holidays, while he was in China. It was very difficult to get used to the conditions of the village. Brothers took sick and came back to the city four days later.
	215-234	HJL had written letters back to China and his mother was pleased. HJL's aunt stayed in China and took care of the family business.
7	235-242	After coming back to America, HJL went back to work in the store and studied at City College for two years. Then HJL went to UCLA's school of business.
	243-249	Because accounting was UCLA's specialty, plus other facts that HJL chose to go to UCLA.
	250-258	There wasn't much campus life at City College for HJL, because he had to go back to work. He joined the Chinese Club.
	259-262	The Chinese Club was formed by American born Chinese with overseas Chinese.
	263-268	HJL worked even more while he was at UCLA so he did not participate in Chinese activities.
269-278	HJL's family members all had to work except when they attended church activities.	
8	279-288	HJL and friends would play on stage after school. When Madam Chiang Kai-shek visited Los Angeles, they played in the church. They were paid for performing.
	289-301	HJL played in Julius Caesar. He always participated in the Christmas activities.
	302-309	HJL always played with schoolmates. Most of time HJL and the other kids had to work in Chinatown.

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8	310-316 317-327	Mother cooked in a little area of the store. In 1927 the family had their first shop. They then moved to New Chinatown.
9	328-337 338-351 352-383	HJL's family belonged to the family association. Father used to be very active in the association. After father died, mother was too busy to participate in the family association's activities. Basically most of the activities in Chinatown was working. The customers were tourists and came to Chinatown for dinner. HJL went to New York to work. After two years, he came back to Los Angeles. It was very difficult to find a job. Jewish would hire Jewish people. The Catholic people would hire Catholics. HJL found a job through a newspaper ad.
10	384-388 389-404 405-410 411-423 424-452	One of the customer's complaints to HJL's boss: "How can you charge me so much, you got a coolie." Most Chinese were industrious people. There were not many Chinese around. HJL didn't feel much discrimination. In those days nothing was good pay. HJL got \$75 a week. The key to success is to be able to strive for something until you got something for it. In the 1960s there were about four or five CPAs in Los Angeles. Eventually HJL got lined up with his classmates from UCLA and had his own office.
11	453-455	HJL felt more Chinese. He never really felt that being a Chinese was much different from others. While at UCLA he was not not much of a campus person.

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